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MAO'S CURRENT THESES ON CONTRADICTION AND THE  
CHENG FENG (PARTY REFORM MOVEMENT)

S U M M A R Y\*

1. The current Cheng Feng (Party Reform Movement), set in motion by Mao's February and March speeches, is a reflection of Mao's apprehension over possible failure of the Second Five-Year Plan (1958-1962): CCP popularity may be severely tested in the course of selling and implementing the Plan.
2. Facing China's demography (a population of 600, 000, 000) and the relatively small size of the CCP, Mao is concerned with possible mass pressures on the regime, particularly in the light of the "Hungarian tragedy" during which CP Hungary disintegrated rapidly. (In the now available text Mao admits anti-regime fermentation appeared in China in the wake of Hungarian events, especially preference for Western democracy.)
3. Mao's recent theses on contradictions are consistent with his traditional attempts to combine implementation of Marxism-Leninism with proper consideration for Chinese realities. His position as "independent" interpreter of the Bolshevik Bible has been acknowledged by Stalin and the Khrushchev regime. (The now available text should be fully acceptable to the Soviets.)
4. The theses that non-antagonistic contradictions exist in a "Socialist" society are no innovations or revisions of Marxism-Leninism. In essence they acknowledge the fact that classes have not been completely eradicated and that "socialism" will not be able, for a long time, to satisfy fully the needs of the people. This situation creates potential conflict.

\* This is the summary of an analysis prepared prior to the publication of Mao's speech (18 June). Certain observations based on study of the incomplete text available have been added in brackets.

The theses dramatize the possibility that such conflicts may explode, and alert the entire Party apparatus not to aggravate the situation which may result from anticipated economic and cultural frustrations of the people. Fully endorsing the use of repression internally when necessary, Mao plays up the "persuasive aspects" of the dictatorship as a preventive-defensive measure.

5. Mao's dramatization of the alleged "liberality" of a Communist regime may become a showpiece of Communist propaganda. It fits surprisingly well into the design of the renewed Soviet line for peaceful coexistence and coincides with the international line. In view of Hungary the Soviets are in no position to dramatize the issue themselves and may appreciate the general propagandistic benefits of Mao's theses for which there are ideological precedents in their own theoretical writings. Nevertheless, there should be Soviet sensitivity on the point of leadership.

6. No uniform acceptance or assimilation of Mao's theses should be expected in the Bloc since this would conflict with the prevailing propaganda pattern of tactical independence of Communist Parties. Limited assimilation in order to absorb fermentation processes is already indicated in the attitude of CP Czechoslovakia.

7. Assimilation in the Bloc is facilitated by the limitations inherent in Mao's approach:

- a) No dilution of Marxism-Leninism.
- b) Right to criticize confined to units already controlled by CCP.
- c) "Destructive" (i.e., uncontrolled) criticism not permitted.
- d) Intellectuals to be brought under strict Party control.
- e) "Weeds" permitted in order to expose "enemy's" propaganda and aims.
- f) Reliance on and eventual use of force internally indirectly acknowledged in concept that "non-antagonistic contradictions" may blow up.

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g) Evaluation of an "antagonism", i.e., threat to regime, remains arbitrary.

(The now available text further spells out the limitations of Mao's "liberal" or "democratic" approach. He does not eliminate the repressive aspects of the dictatorship but combines them with the preventive measures of Party controlled persuasion, discussion and education.)

8. The vulnerabilities of Mao's theses stem from the fact that the Party must explain to the "people" the hard facts of Chinese economic troubles.

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17 June 1957

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1. Three times, at crucial turning points in the development of the Communist Party of China, Mao Tse-tung has put Party and non-Party cadre through an intensive ideological indoctrination program in order to enforce a unified leadership approach to the task ahead.

2. The first and most intensive of these programs (Cheng Feng or Party Reform Movements) which lasted from 1942 to about 1944, consolidated the Chinese Communist Party as well as Mao's leading position and readied the leadership corps for the post-war showdown with the Kuomintang. The second--and less known--Cheng Feng (Three Seasons Reform) was initiated in the summer of 1950 following the consolidation of state power in 1949 and appears to have been geared to the ensuing class struggle period which culminated in 1955-56 with the drastic and rapid communization of China's agricultural and industrial base.

3. The current Cheng Feng, which was set in motion by Mao's report to the Supreme State Conference (27 February to 1 March 1957) and his 12 March speech to the National Conference of Propaganda

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Work, can readily be linked with the emerging Second Five-Year Plan which is to run from 1958 to 1962. Held against the background of the dislocations and dissatisfactions created by the rapid communization program of 1955 and 1956, success or failure of the Second Five-Year Plan could well determine the future course of events within China. A note of apprehension is discernible in the 7 June announcement of the "National Conference of Design" at which the guiding principles of the Second Five-Year Plan were discussed. According to a New York Times dispatch from Hong Kong, 7 June, "the announcement said that the factors that guided the principles of the Second Five-Year Plan were the realization that China was still a big agricultural country with a meager industrial foundation, that it had a huge (600, 000, 000) population with a low living standard and that its economy and cultural development was uneven." Thus, a period beset with many knotty problems is seen ahead for China. The current Party Reform Movement is an alert to the entire Communist Party of China as well as its governmental auxiliaries and fronts, that its leadership and popularity will be severely tested in its efforts to sell and implement the Second Five-Year Plan.

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4. What is Mao's fundamental approach to the leadership problem? Although his February and March speeches have not been published as yet, his thoughts have clearly emerged in a variety of CCP pronouncements and in a summary of his remarks, including textual excerpts, acquired and published by the New York Times Warsaw correspondent, Sidney Gruson (see New York Times, 13 June). These are sufficiently broad in scope to show that Mao's position today is remarkably consistent with those propounded openly in years past. ("On Contradiction", 1937; keynote addresses in the First Cheng Feng Movement, 1942; Report to the Third Plenum of the Central Committee, June 1950; CCP statement "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" of 28 December 1956; etc.)

Mao posed the problem sharply in his February 1942 Cheng Feng speech when he asked "How can Marxist-Leninist theory and the reality of the Chinese Revolution be united?" The body of thought called "Maoism" is but the sum total of answers to this simple question. Hence, it is no accident that the common theme of all three Party Reform Movements is an attack on "subjectivism", which is Party jargon for insufficient recognition of, and inadequate tactical adjustment

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to Chinese reality. "Subjectivism" among the leadership is the root of other harmful attitudes, e.g.: "dogmatism" and "doctrinairism", i.e., mechanical application of Marxist-Bolshevik doctrine; "formalism", i.e., reliance on Party jargon in propaganda; "sectarianism", i.e., counterproductive friction within the Party or between the Party and the "outside"; "bureaucratism, commandism", which are subjectivism in administrative and executive management, i.e., the attitude based on the erroneous notion that reality is changed by issuing orders.

In the February 1942 speech cited Mao seems to express the practical reason for his abhorrence of subjectivism: the demography of China. Visualizing an eventual Party strength of about 4,000,000 he pointed out that the Party would, at best, represent only one per cent out of a population of 400,000,000 and therefore could not afford to antagonize the people unnecessarily. Today the Chinese Party claims about 12,000,000 members out of a claimed population strength of 600,000,000. The Party, then, represents even now only two per cent of the total population.

Mao's concern with China's demography is also evident in his recent speeches. Introducing the concept of birth control--in itself a staggering innovation in the social and cultural pattern of China--he

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cites the inadequacy of agricultural production in feeding a growing population, as well as the limitations of primary educational facilities.

If, as appears indicated, the Second Five-Year Plan may not live up to expectations, Mao's concern with possible mass pressures on the regime is understandable--particularly in the light of the events in Hungary. The "Hungarian tragedy" (as Mao terms it) emerges clearly as the immediate cause for Mao's current ideological and practical deliberations, stemming from concern not only over the popular uprising but also over the rapid disintegration of CP Hungary.

5. Mao's is the approach of an eminently practical, self-made revolutionary who deals with specific situations and people--and accepts formulae only when and if they apply. Lest it be misinterpreted as a disposition toward breaking away from the Soviet Union, it must be emphasized that the principle of "unity of theory and practice" is a standard tenet of Marxism-Leninism and was one of Stalin's pet phrases. Students of Mao's thought have repeatedly reported their inability to find any trace of conceptual heterodoxy. In particular were they unable to discern any deviationism in the Party indoctrination material issued during the first Cheng Feng (1942) which is the model for the current Party "rectification" campaign. Neither can there be

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found any deviations from fundamental Bolshevik thought in the available materials on Mao's speeches and the current Cheng Feng. What is evident currently, as it was in 1942, is Mao's insistence upon expressing and unfolding the Marxist-Bolshevik principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat in terms of Chinese reality.

In 1942, the first Cheng Feng was accompanied by the demotion and loss of influence of a small group of Moscow-trained Chinese Communist leaders who had held key positions in the Central Committee of the CCP, on the grounds of their inability to adapt Moscow-taught Marxism-Leninism to China's specific conditions. Today too much is made of the unorthodoxy of Mao's thesis on "Contradictions within the Ranks of the People", particularly as an indication of a Sino-Soviet ideological rift. Mao as an interpreter of the Bolshevik Bible has always insisted that he needs no middleman in matters Chinese. Stalin acknowledged this position through the 1950 Sino-Soviet treaty, and the Khrushchev regime consistently enhanced the prestige of the CCP.

6. Mao's thesis that there continue to exist in a "Socialist" society a variety of non-antagonistic contradictions is based on Marx and Lenin, and has even been acknowledged by Stalin and other Soviet leaders and

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theoreticians. (Mao first expounded this thesis in his essay "On Contradiction", written in 1937). In plain language Mao's position can be summarized as follows: In order to achieve power the Communist Party must use force to crush the class enemy and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., solve the "antagonistic contradictions" of the class struggle. After the Communist Party has achieved full state and economic control, there is, theoretically speaking, no more class conflict, since classes have been abolished. The "class enemy" is now mainly represented by the external threat from the imperialists. Nevertheless, internally there still may develop socio-economic-political conflicts, problems and pressures. Since there are no more hostile classes, these conflicts, problems and pressures are theoretically speaking "non-antagonistic contradictions", i.e., capable of solution by means other than force, principally by persuasion, discussion and education. If not correctly handled, however, these contradictions may become "antagonistic", i.e., threaten the power position of the regime as they did in Hungary, necessitating the use of force. Through his thesis, then, Mao addresses himself in greater detail than any other Communist theoretician,

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to a fundamental, practical proposition, i.e., under what circumstances the "dictatorship of the proletariat" should bring into play its repressive forces internally. It needs to be emphasized that Mao does not now and never has repudiated the use of force or terror per se. Concerning the use of force against the "external enemy" Mao has never expressed any modifying or qualifying positions. Concerning the use of force internally his current positions do not question the principle, but merely the usefulness and productivity of terror under certain circumstances. In this Mao is no innovator. He merely follows overt Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist doctrine (although not Stalinist practice) when he attempts to establish a balance between the coercive and the paternalistic aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The following statement from a report by A. A. Zhdanov to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 21 February 1937, illustrates the point. Zhdanov said:

"Leninism teaches: The dictatorship of the proletariat has its periods, its special forms and diversified methods of work. During the civil war, the coercive aspect of the dictatorship is especially conspicuous.... On the other hand, during the period of socialist construction, the peaceful organizational and cultural work of the dictatorship, revolutionary law, etc., are especially conspicuous. But here again it by no means follows that during the period of construction, the coercive side of the dictatorship

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has fallen away, or could do so.... The organs of suppression, the army and other organizations are as necessary now, in the period of construction, as they were during the civil war period...."

The Stalinist regime paid lip service to the paternalistic aspects of the dictatorship but perpetuated the terror system. Mao, although emphasizing the "peaceful" and persuasive aspect of the dictatorship for the time being, disguises by this very emphasis the fact that the "organs of suppression" in China continue to exist with their functions unchanged. Nor could Mao afford to let "the coercive side of the dictatorship" "fall away" since by definition his thesis admits that "non-antagonistic contradictions" may become "antagonistic" if not properly handled. Given the press of the huge population mass of Chinese, the low level of economic and educational development, the realization that the Second Five-Year Plan may carry social-economic progress only too small a step forward, Mao's defensive use of the persuasive aspects of the dictatorship represents valid Communist tactics, and "orthodox" at that.

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7. The defensive or preventive nature of Mao's thought, underlying his emphasis on "persuasion", "correct handling of contradictions" and the Cheng Feng Party training program, emerges also from a recent Peking broadcast (26 April 1957) on "Why are there contradictions within the ranks of the people?" which unmistakably reflects Mao's position. The broadcast answered the title question thus: "First of all we must understand that the main contradictions [Emphasis supplied] in our country now are the contradictions between the people's desire to build an advanced industrial nation and the reality of a backward agricultural nation, between the people's demand for rapid economic and cultural growth and the present economic and cultural conditions that thwart their demand." [Emphasis supplied] Anticipating continued frustration of "the people's demand" Mao enjoins his Party apparatus, especially through the Cheng Feng campaign, not to aggravate the situation unnecessarily by "bureaucratic" working methods since the long-term plans of the regime and the short-term desires and aspirations of the "people" may conflict. This, in essence, is the meaning of the maoism which reads that "at present the contradictions between the masses of our country and the leaders result mainly from

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bureaucratic leadership in work." In short, if anything goes wrong (i.e., if non-antagonistic contradictions become antagonistic) the Party apparatus will bear the blame but not Mao.

8. Khrushchev's negative reply to the question on the 1 June CBS television interview "whether these contradictions [i.e., between the leaders and the masses] do not exist in the Soviet Union today" raises the question of the impact and applicability of Mao's theses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

It is submitted that the Soviets have no reason for rejecting the substance, and every reason for accepting the positive propaganda value of Mao's theses. The timing and propaganda content of the Mao speeches, with their conspicuous emphasis on the "liberality" of a Communist regime, fit surprisingly well into the design of the renewed Soviet "peaceful coexistence" drive through which they apparently hope to compensate for their loss of prestige suffered as a result of the crises in 1956. The Soviets could hardly afford to dramatize the "respectability" of the Communist system at this time, both in view of their previous bungling (secret Khrushchev speech) and in view of their intervention in Hungary. If not actually co-ordinated with the Soviets, Mao's February and March speeches are fully compatible with current Soviet tactics and may become an important showpiece of Communist

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propaganda, especially in underdeveloped areas. Even the minor disagreements between Mao's and Soviet positions as well as Mao's minor criticisms of the Soviet regime represent attitudes fully compatible with the current international Communist party line. The latter has been most clearly expressed by the veteran CPUSA leader, William Z. Foster (Daily Worker, 12 June) who is a "conservative" Communist and still enjoys Soviet trust. This is his formula:

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"For a less dogmatic approach to applying and developing Marxism-Leninism,  
for a more critical attitude towards other Communist Parties  
and the countries of socialism,  
and for an all out struggle against bureaucracy."

Mao's speeches meet all three requirements. The built-in proviso that the Chinese method of "solving problems" does "not apply to every other country" also agrees with the general formula developed during last year's ideological crises, i.e., provided Soviet experience serves as a fundamental model, local variations in implementation are permissible although they are not binding on other Communist Parties or regimes.

Indirectly, therefore, Mao's speeches offset the harsh effects of the Soviet line against "national Communism" which was developed

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under the impact of last year's ideological and disciplinary crisis. "International solidarity" has been largely restored and factionalism in the world movement is subsiding. A limited ideological rapprochement with Tito is in the making.

Mao's speeches are a shot in the arm for the abortive campaign started by the 20th CPSU Congress to give the international Communist movement a new look of greater decentralization.

In this opinion, therefore, a uniform official reaction to Mao's speeches and theses is not/be expected in the Soviet Bloc. The extent of official endorsement or assimilation will depend entirely on the correlation between fermentation processes and the regime's ability to control them. Gomulka, for example, would have to contain Mao's views if they were used by the radical liberals to exert pressure on the regime. The Kadar government, faced with the need for overcoming large-scale disaffection, may yet make controlled use of the Chinese method.

A resolution of the CC of CP Czechoslovakia of 13-14 June on ideological activity of the Party and measures aimed at raising its standards, emphasizes the need for "criticism of shortcomings in our

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society", and states that "any form of sectarian narrowing of the front of our literature and art.... is alien to our Party." At the same time the resolution takes a firm stand against "revisionism" and for "proletarian internationalism" and promises that the Party "will exert every effort to see that all intellectuals accept the Marxist world outlook...." This resolution appears to be a typically Czech modification of the Mao theses, i.e., a minimum of "liberalization" combined with a maximum of controls.

The Soviets, in addition to appreciating the general benefits from Mao's dramatization of the alleged respectability and liberality of the Communist system, should also be able to appreciate the "orthodoxy" of Mao in view of sufficient parallels and precedents in their own theoretical writings.\* The latter, however, are distinctly

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\* Precedents, past and present, are numerous. In 1946, an obscure Soviet student of philosophy, Tsolak Aleksandrovich Stepanyan (in the Young Bolshevik, No. 3-4, June-July 1946), postulated a contradiction in the USSR "between the growth of public demand... and the relatively unsatisfactory level of the continually growing material production," and predicted that this contradiction would continue to exist under Communism. This formulation bears a striking resemblance to what Mao now postulates as China's main contradiction.

In 1947 A. A. Zhdanov, Stalin's propaganda chief and Malenkov's competitor, launched a campaign for the solution of non-antagonistic

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inferior in quality and depth, a fact which permits Mao and the Chinese Party to point out, with some justification, that in Mao's writings Marxism-Leninism is being "creatively developed." One could easily imagine that the Soviet leaders, while praising the Chinese for their original ideas, could administer a severe dressing down to their own theoreticians and propagandists for their inability to produce "creative" think-pieces. With all their emphasis on international decentralization, the Soviets still are sensitive on points of leadership. This may be the reason for Khrushchev's almost automatic rejection of the idea that in the USSR conflicts exist between the leaders and the masses.

In general, however, the Soviets should be satisfied with the limitations which Mao built into his concepts on how to handle potential

contradictions through criticism and self-criticism. Zhdanov's death in 1948 appears to have halted this campaign. In 1954, however, his thesis was revived, and Soviet theoreticians have dealt with the solution of non-antagonistic contradictions, admitting conflicts between social groups, and more recently (Kommunist, No. 5, April 1957) conflicts within the Party. Pravda, (26 December 1956) criticized the Soviet journal Questions of Philosophy for inadequate study of "real" or "concrete" contradictions. Although a detailed comparative study of Soviet and Chinese treatment of this ideological problem is not available at this writing, no Soviet reference admitting a conflict between "the leaders and the masses" has become evident, although, of course, Soviet attacks on bureaucracy in leadership and on attitudes isolating the Party from the masses have been standard themes.

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conflicts in a "socialist" society. These limitations, less conspicuous than the propagandistic emphasis on "persuasion" and "democracy", are briefly discussed below.

10. The limitations imposed by Mao on the applicability of his theses to other areas are paralleled by the limitations inherent in his speeches as well as in the current Cheng Feng in respect to their domestic application.

These limitations are:

- a) Mao's theses and the Cheng Feng are preventive in nature;
- b) The preventive objectives require a stronger CCP both in terms of ideological purity and organizational control.
- c) The use of terror or repressive measures is governed by the success or failure of preventive measures.

11. The purpose of the current Cheng Feng is to ensure that the Communist Party be so oriented and deployed as to prevent "non-antagonistic contradictions" from becoming unmanageable and explosive. Hence the far-reaching categorization and definition of all

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"problems", large and small, as if by identification alone a solution could be achieved; the fixing of responsibility for the solution of the problems on the entire Party apparatus; the exhortations warning against "bureaucratism" and "subjectivism".

On the other hand, the current Cheng Feng is not to dilute "Marxism-Leninism". Hence the proposed further tightening of ideological and organizational discipline, and the particular emphasis on the education of intellectuals in "Party spirit", i.e., traditional Marxism-Leninism as opposed to "liberalism."

12. Mao's concept of persuasion is the persuasion of the "masses" by the Party and not persuasion of the Party by the masses. Criticism is therefore limited.

Organizationally it appears from pertinent references that the right of the masses to criticize pertains only to the Communist-controlled "units" or organizations (political, semi-governmental, agricultural cooperatives, etc.) which were created during the period of communization (1955, 1956). This form of organizationally controlled criticism and self-criticism keeps discussion in channels.

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Substantively criticism must be "constructive", i.e., compatible with general CCP programs and policies. As early as June 8--three months after the Cheng Feng campaign was launched--the Peking People's Daily found it necessary to put the brakes on "criticism of a destructive nature." Using language reminiscent of that previously used at the time of intense and coercive drives against counter-revolutionaries, the party organ said:

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"There are persons who are trying to use the Cheng Feng movement of the CCP as a means to carry out severe class struggles.... Although the large scale class struggle in our country has largely subsided, it is by no means finished. This is particularly true on the ideological front [i.e., where it really matters] .... There are a very small number of people who have outwardly expressed support to socialism but are still secretly longing for capitalism and the type of political life in Europe and the United States. These persons form the right-wing groups today."

The next day People's Daily made it crystal clear that the Party cannot afford indiscriminately to regard all criticism as helpful and beneficial to the people. While the editorial says "all views and opinions beneficial to the socialist undertakings should 'bloom' in full," it characterizes as "of a destructive nature" all criticism which "aims at undermining the socialist undertakings, the People's Democratic Dictatorship and the unity between the Party and the people." Singled

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out for attack are "those who publicize the view that the leadership exercised by the Communist party should be abolished."

It is significant that the news organ of the Polish CP, Trybuna Ludu, published on 13 June a report of its Peking correspondent on these People's Daily articles.

13. The indoctrination of intellectuals forms an effective limitation on the application of the much-publicized slogan "Let all flowers bloom, let all schools of thought contend." As the President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences put it on 16 May 1957, it was only thanks to "the movement of ideological re-education carried out in recent years in China" that the "hundred schools of thought" movement is possible now, and "the free debates [now] taking place among the intellectuals aim at bringing the professors and scientists of China still closer to the Party and at improving the Party's direction."

This is the 1957 echo of Mao's theme of the 1942-44 Cheng Feng movement. "There is in reality no such thing as art for art's sake.... The Party's artistic and literary activity occupies a definite and assigned position in the Party's revolutionary work and is subordinated

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to the prescribed revolutionary task of the Party in a given revolutionary period." Mao himself, in the version of his speeches reported by Sidney Gruson, added an interesting interpretation to the slogan. "There need be no fear that the policy of 100 flowers will yield poisoned fruit. Sometimes it is necessary even to have this poisoned fruit to know what we are fighting against. For this reason, too, it has been decided to publish the full works of Chiang Kai-shek and even a volume of some of the Voice of America broadcasts. It is not enough to attack reactionaries. We must know exactly what the reactionaries want and what they represent."

The use of provocation as a means of weeding out "poisoned flowers" is, of course, good Bolshevik practice. In full control of the Party apparatus and the repressive state organs, Mao can well afford to say "Marxism-Leninism is not afraid of criticism and does not fear discussion." He controls the machinery to ensure that Marxism-Leninism will win out.

14. Although Mao places conspicuous emphasis on the persuasive aspects of the dictatorship at this stage, he endorses without qualifications the "use of force against the enemy".\* His criticism

\* Mao admitted the liquidation of 800,000 counterrevolutionaries prior to 1954. The figure is open to question; it probably reaches into several million. Mao's statement that terror has not been used since 1954 is also open to question.

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of Stalin parallels the position of the 20th CPSU Congress and Khrushchev's secret speech according to which Stalin used force unproductively, especially against the Communist Party.

If it is accepted that Mao's concept of the dictatorship is to establish a correct balance between the persuasive and repressive aspects of the dictatorship, the question arises as to when Mao would consider the use of terror justified. On the basis of the available materials on Mao's February and March speeches, the answer is obviously that Mao would use repression and terror internally whenever the power position of the regime was threatened. This is evident from his renewed endorsement of Soviet intervention in Hungary and from his position on strikes. Rejecting all strikes as being "never beneficial to the working class", Mao considers small strikes as useful symptoms of a malady to be cured but does not consider "big general strikes" the same way because "they are directed against the regime."

It is interesting to speculate on how big a strike in China would have to be in order to be considered a threat to the regime. In the light of past experience, it is fair to assume that the determination of what constitutes a threat to the regime would be made arbitrarily.

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For example, it may be useful to recall that in September 1952 Lo Jui-ch'ing, Minister of Public Security, announced that "through the campaign for suppression of counterrevolutionaries with fanfare" from December 1950 onwards, "we succeeded basically in clearing up the remnant influence of counterrevolution on the mainland of China."

Nevertheless, within eighteen months (February 1954), Liu Shao-ch'i announced, in connection with a Party purge, that the regime and the masses were increasingly threatened by counter-revolutionaries from within, the rationalization being that "the more we advance in our economic construction, the more vicious will be the sabotage of enemies at home and abroad."\* The Minister of Public Security, who had in 1950 announced completion of the "basic" suppression of counterrevolutionaries, in 1955 blandly explained that those previously suppressed were overt counterrevolutionaries and

\* This formulation is reminiscent of Stalin's "mistaken" concept that the intensity of the class struggle increases as socialism progresses.

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that "under-cover" counterrevolutionaries were the target of the intensive 1955 drive.

These leaders' statements show how arbitrarily their characterization of the situation has changed in the past, and raises questions as to how many years the present policy will last.

The new line is again that "the remnants of the counter-revolutionaries have been basically eliminated." These are almost exactly the same words used by the Minister of Public Security in 1952. Within two years he modified his statement to allow for a new, brutal counterrevolutionary drive. Three months after the initiation of the 1957 Cheng Feng, People's Daily ominously pointed out that the class struggle continues. Given this pattern of flexibility the "persuasive" aspects of Maoism which are currently being emphasized cannot be projected into the future.

15. The 1957 Cheng Feng represents Mao's realization that the Chinese Revolution has collided with the hard reality and problems of constructive planning and building at a time when the Soviet Union and the Eastern European Satellites are beset with internal political-economic difficulties. The fundamental weaknesses in Mao's

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ostensibly realistic and Sinified approach to the leadership problem appear to be:

- a) That no amount of "brainwashing" can change or affect the "main" contradictions "between the people's demand for rapid economic and cultural growth and the present economic and cultural conditions that thwart this demand."
- b) That no amount of free or ostensibly free discussion of non-antagonistic contradictions and their reasons can change the hard facts of China's economy. The price of consumer goods is not determined by ideological considerations.
- c) That an "unbureaucratic" Party leadership may listen to criticism but is not obligated to accept it. Since it still is bound by "democratic centralism", i.e., by policy decisions of higher Party echelons, it can arbitrarily reject and brand as "unconstructive" any criticism which conflicts with Party policies and programs.
- d) That the slogan "Let many flowers bloom" is watered down by the fact that the intellectuals have been brought under tight Party discipline through their mass organization or in government agencies where they work.
- e) That the slogan of long term coexistence and mutual supervision of and by non-Communist Parties is meaningless since the non-Communist Parties are manipulated by the Communist Party.
- f) That the policy of "building the country on industry and thrift" which is to be propagated is a euphemism for an austerity program.

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16. A Pravda report of 9 June (see New York Times, 10 June, page 6) illustrates clearly the contradictions inherent in the Cheng Feng campaign. The Chinese Communist Party is being brainwashed and restrained in order to steel itself for a propaganda job which may yet turn out to be counterproductive. According to the New York Times account, "Party officials in Sian [in Northwest China] told Pravda they had appointed their best men as propagandists to help the people understand the contradictions that arise in the course of socialist constructions and to make them see more clearly the wonderful tomorrow of our homeland and thus consolidate the forces of our people." Pravda also illustrates how the CCP is forced to deal with the problems of today. According to the New York Times version "party propagandists directly and candidly and in detail tell the masses why consumption of cotton textiles had to be cut, why prices went up on certain goods, why there was a substantial shortage of housing space, why propaganda to limit births had begun in China, and why queues for street cars, buses and in butcher shops were still inevitable."

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In brief, when all the contradictions within Mao's thesis on contradictions are examined, the whole affair can be summed up in the following slogan:

BIG TROUBLE -- BIG STICK

SMALL TROUBLE -- SMALL STICK.